



Austro-Hungarian
Orders, Medals and Decorations
Volume VI: Semi-Official Awards
Part V: Society Awards 2



by
Richard R. Lussier, Dr. P.H.





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Introduction

This volume contains a description and analysis of the semi-official medals and decorations issued within the Austrian and later Austro-Hungarian Empire other than those made for the collector trade or for commercial purposes. This will include medals issued by entities other than the central Austrian or Austro-Hungarian government so long as they are directly related to the military mission of the government. This volume on semi-official medals will describe medals issued by entities other than the emperor to military or civil officials, by municipalities such as cities and cantons, by military units, by societies such as the Red Cross and the War Help Bureau and by veteran societies. The exception will be the official Red Cross decorations which were issued by the central government and will be addressed in the volume on decorations. Thus the reader can expect to find in this section of this volume a description of semi-official awards issued by Austrian Societies.





Semi-Official Society Awards

Austrian Imperial Congress Delegates Medal

(Medaille der Österreichischen Reichstagsabgeordneten)



Date Issued: 1848

Reason Issued: Issued to the delegates to the first Austrian Imperial Congress in Kremsier in 1848.

Classes or Types: One

Interesting Facts: None known

Hallmarks: None Known

Design: A round medal with a suspension eye.

Obverse: A plain field inscribed **REICHSTAGS ABGEORDNETER**. Translation: Congress Deputy

Reverse: A plain field with the date 1848

Weight: Unknown

Size: 38 mm

Type of Material: Silver

Variations: None known

Designer: Unknown

Manufacturer: Unknown

Number Issued: Unknown

Case: Unknown

Ribbon: Half black and half yellow with the yellow on the right side

Attachments: None

Miniature: None known





Semi-Official Society Awards

Reichstag Membership Medal

(Reichstag Mitgliedschaft Medaille)



Date Issued: 1848

Reason Issued: Worn by proclamation of the Reichstag to indicate loyalty to the empire and membership in the Reichstag during the revolution in Vienna in October 1848.

Classes or Types: One

Interesting Facts: None known

Hallmarks: None Known

Design: A round medal with a slightly raised rim and a hole drilled in the top for suspension purposes.

Obverse: Inside a slightly raised rim is a plain field on which is inscribed in two lines: **REICHSTAGS / ABGEORDNETER.** Translation: Congress Deputy. Above this inscription is a six pointed star.

Reverse: A plain field on which is inscribed in two lines: **WIEN / 1848.** Translation: Vienna 1848

Weight: Unknown

Size: 38 mm

Type of Material: Bronze

Variations: None known

Designer: Unknown

Manufacturer: Unknown

Number Issued: Unknown

Case: Unknown

Ribbon: Half white and half red with the red portion on the left

Attachments: None

Miniature: None known





Semi-Official Society Awards

Prague Volunteer Lifesaving Corp Merit Medal

(Verdienstmedaille des Prager Freiwilligen Rettungskorps)



Image courtesy of Dorotheum

Date Issued: 1848– 1917

Reason Issued: Issued to members of the Prague Volunteer Lifesaving Corp for meritorious service.

Classes or Types: Two

- Silver Prague Volunteer Lifesaving Corp Merit Medal
- Bronze Prague Volunteer Lifesaving Corp Merit Medal

Interesting Facts: None known

Hallmarks: None Known

Design:

- Pre 1860: A round medal with a raised rim and with a large spade shaped oval suspension eye
- Post 1860: A round medal with a raised rim and a wedge shaped suspension eye.

Obverse:

- Pre 1860: Inside a raised rim is a plain field on which is the coat of arms of Prague: a castle with three towers with an open door in which an officer can be seen with a rifle. Below the coat of arms in three lines is the inscription: **FREIWILLIGES / RETTUNGS CORPS / IN PRAG**. Translation: Volunteer Lifesaving Corp in Prague (See above image)
- Post 1860: Inside a raised rim is a plain field on which the coat of arms of Prague (a castle with three towers with an open door in which an officer can be seen with a rifle) is depicted on a shield around which is a baroque design. Around the coat of arms following the counter of the edge of the medal is the inscription: *** PRAZSKY DOBROVOLNY OCHRANNY SBOR * PRAGER FREIWILLIGES RETTUNGS CORPS**. Translation: Prague Volunteer Lifesaving Corp (see adjacent image)





Semi-Official Society Awards
Prague Volunteer Lifesaving Corp Merit Medal
(Verdienstmedaille des Prager Freiwilligen Rettungskorps)



Reverse:

- Pre 1860: Inside a raised rim on a plain field is the Habsburg eagle above which is the imperial crown. Below the eagle is the raised inscription **VERIBUS UNITIS**. Translation: United Strength (The motto of the reign of Franz Joseph) (see above)
- Post 1860: Inside a raised rim on a plain field is the Habsburg eagle with the imperial crown on its head. Across the tail feathers and claws of the eagle is a ribbon with the inscription **VERIBUS UNITIS**. Translation: United Strength (The motto of the reign of Franz Joseph)

Weight:

- Pre 1860 Bronze Medal: Unknown
- Post 1860 Silver Medal: 23.5 grams
- Post 1860 Bronze Medal: Unknown

Size: 40 mm for all medals

Type of Material:

- Pre 1860: Bronze
- Post 1860: Silver and bronze

Variations:

- Bronze medal issued prior to 1860 (depicted above)
- Silver medal issued after 1860 (See top of following page)
- Bronze medal issued after 1860 (same as silver medal in design)

Designer: Unknown

Manufacturer: Unknown

Number Issued: Unknown

Case: Unknown

Ribbon: White

Attachments: None

Miniature: None known





Semi-Official Society Awards

Vienna Community Council Members Medal

(Medaille der Wiener Gemeinderatsmitglieder)



Date Issued: 1848

Reason Issued: Issued to the delegates to the Vienna Community Council of 1848.

Classes or Types: One

Interesting Facts: Official 1848 insignia of the state house and state residence of Vienna

Hallmarks: None Known

Design: A round medal with a suspension eye.

Obverse: A plain field inscribed **DER GEMEINDERAT DER STADT OF WIEN 1848**. Translation: The 1848 Vienna community council

Reverse: A plain field on which is the Vienna coat of arms

Weight: Unknown

Size: 38 mm

Type of Material: Bronze

Variations: None known

Designer: Unknown

Manufacturer: Unknown

Number Issued: Unknown

Case: Unknown

Ribbon: Half white and half red with the red portion on the right

Attachments: None

Miniature: None known





Semi-Official Society Awards
The Therese Countess Wolkenstein Ladies Society
(Das Therese Graflich Wolkenstein'sche Damenstift)



Image attributed to Osterreichs Orden , vom
Mittelalter bis zur Gegenwart, Johann Stolzer
&Christian Steeb

Date Issued: 1859

Reason Issued: As a membership badge for the Therese Countess Wolkenstein Ladies Society

Classes or Types: One

Interesting Facts:

- Therese Countess Wolkenstein was the founder of the society
- The society was based in Innsbruck
- This was considered an internal ladies society (All members lived together)
- There were 6 (later 8) poor noble orphans or widows who were members of the society at any one time
- There were five probationary members at any one time in addition to the full members
- After 1864 there were honorary members of this society
- This society based its statutes on those of the Theresia Society in Innsbruck
- Members received an annual stipend of 630 gulden
- The insignia had to be returned upon marriage or death of the recipient

Hallmarks: None Known

Design: A gold bordered oval medallion with a suspension eye.

Obverse: A gold bordered white oval medallion with the coat of arms of the Countess Wolkenstein painted upon it.

Reverse: A gold bordered white oval medallion on which is the inscription in 8 lines: **ZUR / ERIN-
NERUNG / AN DIE / STIFTERIN / THERESE / GRAEFIN / WOLKENSTEIN / RODENEGG.** Translation: to commemorate the Therese Countess Wolkenstein Rodenegg Society

Weight: 20 grams

Size: 51 mm in height and 33 mm in width

Type of Material: Gold and enamel

Variations: None known





Semi-Official Society Awards

The Therese Countess Wolkenstein Ladies Society
(Das Therese Graflich Wolkenstein'sche Damenstift)

Designer: C.F. Rotha Company of Vienna

Manufacturer: C.F. Rotha Company of Vienna

Number Issued: 12 were made and 6 (later 8) were issued at any one time.

Case: Unknown

Ribbon: Red and white striped which is worn as a bow

Attachments: None

Miniature: None known





Semi-Official Society Awards

Military Invalids Cross

(Militärinvalidenkreuz)



Date Issued: 1867

Reason Issued: Given as an insignia of honor for the military invalids in residence at the Royal and Imperial Hospital.

Classes or Types: One

Interesting Facts: None known

Hallmarks: None Known

Design: A clawed cross with an applied laurel wreath and a center medallion.

Obverse: A clawed cross with an applied laurel wreath and a center medallion with an oak leaf wreath within which are the letters **MI** (Militär-Invalide)

Reverse: Plain

Weight: Unknown

Size: 33 mm

Type of Material: Bronze

Variations: None known

Designer: Unknown

Manufacturer: Unknown

Number Issued: Unknown

Case: Unknown

Ribbon: Red

Attachments: None

Miniature: None known





Semi-Official Society Awards
Ladies Society of the Archduchess Stephanie in Vienna
(Damenstift der Erzherzogin Stephanie in Wien)

Date Issued: 1881

Reason Issued: As a membership badge for the Ladies Society of the Archduchess Stephanie in Vienna

Classes or Types: One

Interesting Facts:

- Archduchess Stephanie was the founder of the society
- This was considered an external ladies society (All members did not live together)
- There were 12 members of the society at any one time
- The insignia had to be returned upon marriage or death of the recipient

Hallmarks: None Known

Design: Unknown

Obverse: Unknown

Reverse: Unknown

Weight: Unknown

Size: Unknown.

Type of Material: Unknown

Variations: None known

Designer: Unknown

Manufacturer: Unknown

Number Issued: 12 ladies at any one time.

Case: Unknown

Ribbon: Unknown

Attachments: None

Miniature: None known





Semi-Official Society Awards

Ladies Society of the Archduchess Stephanie in Prague

(Damenstift der Erzherzogin Stephanie in Prag)

Date Issued: 1882

Reason Issued: As a membership badge for the Ladies Society of the Archduchess Stephanie in Prague

Classes or Types: One

Interesting Facts:

- Archduchess Stephanie was the founder of the society
- This was considered an external ladies society (All members did not live together)
- The insignia had to be returned upon marriage or death of the recipient

Hallmarks: None Known

Design: Unknown

Obverse: Unknown

Reverse: Unknown

Weight: Unknown

Size: Unknown.

Type of Material: Unknown

Variations: None known

Designer: Unknown

Manufacturer: Unknown

Number Issued: Unknown

Case: Unknown

Ribbon: Unknown

Attachments: None

Miniature: None known





Semi-Official Society Awards
Commemoration Medal of the German Knights Order
(Erinnerungsmedaille des Deutscher Ritterorden)



Date Issued: November 19, 1894

Reason Issued: To commemorate the enthronement of Archduke Eugen as High and German Master

Classes or Types: Two

- Silver Medal
- Bronze Medal

Interesting Facts: Given to the order knights and other functionaries who participated in the enthronement ceremony for Archduke Eugen as Grand Master of the order in 1894.

Hallmarks: None Known

Design: A round medal with raised and pearly coined edge and a decorative suspension ring.

Obverse: A portrait of Archduke Eugen facing to the viewers right. He is wearing the cape and the insignia of the Hoch- und Deutchmeister of the German knight's order. Behind the bust is the numeral 18 and in front of the bust is the number 94 (Date 1894). Around the bust is a beaded line following the contour of the medal. Between the beaded line and the edge of the medal is an inscription: **EVGENIVS D. G. ARCH. AVST. ORD.**

TEVT.SVPR. MAG. Between the words MAG and EVGENIS is a rosette. Near the arm of the bust appears the name of the designer A. Scharff





Semi-Official Society Awards

Commemoration Medal of the German Knights Order

(Erinnerungsmedaille des Deutscher Ritterorden)



Reverse: Under a plumed knights helmet is Eugen's coat of arms with the insignia of the Hoch und Deutche meister of the German Knights Order surrounded by a collar of the Order of the Golden Fleece. Above the collar on a plain field is inscribed **IVSTE ET FIRMITER**. Around these images and text is a simulated cord following the contour of the medal. Between the beaded line and the edge of the medal is inscribed: **PROF. II IANVARII 1887 - INTHR. 19. NOVEMBRIS 1894**.

Weight:

- Silver medals are 20 grams,
- Bronze are unknown

Size: 40 mm in diameter

Type of Material: Silver and bronze

Variations: None known

Designer: Anton Scharf

Manufacturer: Unknown

Number Issued: Unknown

Case: Unknown

Ribbon: A 38 mm wide Black Tri-fold ribbon or a black cord

Attachments: None

Miniature: None known





Semi-Official Society Awards

Revolution Commemoration Medal of the Vienna Social Democratic Party

(Revolutionen Erinnerungsmedaille der wiener Sozialdemokratie Partei)



Date Issued: March 13, 1898

Reason Issued: To commemorate the 50th anniversary of the uprising of the Social Democrats in Vienna in 1848.

Classes or Types: Four

- Silver Medal
- Small Silver Medal
- Bronze Medal
- Small Bronze Medal

Interesting Facts: Issued to commemorate the battles fought by the Social Democrats and the Academic Legion in the 1848 revolution. The battles commemorated are: the battle of March 15, 1848: this is generally considered the first battle of the March Revolution. The battle took place in Vienna; the battle of May 26, 1848, this battle was between the Academic Legion, the Vienna Citizens Committee and the national guard; the battle of August 23, 1848 in which the Civic Guard defeated the revolutionaries; the battle of October 6, 1848; the battles of October 24-31 in which the revolt was put down by Windischgratz.

Hallmarks: None Known

Design: A round medal with a raised rim and an attached suspension eye.

Obverse: Inside a raised rim is an inscription, which makes a full circle starting, and ending at six o'clock. The inscription reads **DEN FREIHEITSKAEMPFERN DES JAHRES 1848 DIE OESTERREICHISCHE SOCIALDEMOKRATIE 1898**. Translation: the freedom fighters of the year 1848, the Austrian Social Democracy 1898.

Beneath the scene is the date **13, Marz** (13 March) the day Prince Metternich was forced to resign.





Semi-Official Society Awards

Revolution Commemoration Medal of the Vienna Social Democratic Party

(Revolutionen Erinnerungsmedaille der wiener Sozialdemokratie Partei)



Type II medal in silver

Reverse: Inside a raised rim is a laurel wreath tied at the bottom with a bow. Inside the wreath is an inscription in five lines: * /13. Marz/ 26. Mai * 23. Aug/ 6., 24.- 31. Oct. /1848

Weight:

- **Silver Medal:** Unknown
- **Small Silver Medal:** Unknown
- **Bronze Medal:** Unknown
- **Small Bronze Medal:** 14.8 grams

Size:

- **Silver Medal:** 50 mm in diameter not including the suspension ring
- **Small Silver Medal:** 2 mm thick and 30 mm in diameter not including the suspension ring
- **Bronze Medal:** 50 mm in diameter not including the suspension ring
- **Small Bronze Medal:** 2 mm thick and 30 mm in diameter not including the suspension ring

Type of Material:

- Type I Medal: Silver and chocolate bronze
- Type II Medal: Silver and gilt Bronze

Variations: Two Variations are known to exist

- Type I as described above
- Type II as described above except the reverse has the date 1848 in the center surrounded by a laurel wreath tied at the bottom with a bow

Designer: Unknown

Manufacturer: Unknown

Number Issued: Unknown

Case: Unknown

Ribbon: Red



Attachments: None

Miniature: None known





Semi-Official Society Awards

Andreas Hofer Society Commemoration Medal

(Andreas Hofer Vereins Erinnerungsmedaille)



Date Issued: 1902

Reason Issued: To commemorate the 100th anniversary of the Andreas Hofer Society in Vienna

Classes or Types: One

Interesting Facts: Andreas Hofer who lived from 1767–1810 was an Austrian patriot. After Austria's defeat by Napoleon I in 1805 Austria was forced to cede the Tyrol to France's ally Bavaria. In 1809, when Austria renewed its war on France, Hofer led the Tyrolean peasants in rebellion against Bavaria and the French. After several military successes he was made governor of the Tyrol by the Austrians. In Oct., 1809, Austria was obliged by the Treaty of Schönbrunn to abandon the Tyrol, but Hofer continued to resist. He was betrayed to the French, court-martialed, and shot at Mantua.

Hallmarks: None Known

Design: A round medal with a raised rim and an attached suspension eye.

Obverse: Inside the raised rim is an inscription with a pearly line separating it from an image of the Hofer obelisk in the Alps. The inscription reads: **TIROLER ANDREAS HOFER VEREIN IN WIEN**. Translation: Tyrolean Andreas Hofer Society in Vienna. The ends of the inscription are separated at the 6 o'clock position by a star.

Reverse: The reverse of the medal has a Tyrolean eagle in the center and the inscription: **SACHSEN KLEMME IN TIROL XV AUGUST MDCCCLII**. Translation: Saxon aggression in Tyrol August 15, 1882.

Weight: Unknown

Size: Unknown

Type of Material: Silver

Variations: None known

Designer: Unknown

Manufacturer: Unknown

Number Issued: Unknown

Case: Unknown

Ribbon: Half white and half green with the green on the right

Attachments: None

Miniature: None known





Semi-Official Society Awards

Gold Service Cross of the Hoch and Deutchmeister Schutzenkorps

(Goldenes Verdienstkreuz des Hoch und Deutchmeister Schutzenkorps)

Date Issued: Unknown

Reason Issued: To commemorate service in the Hoch und Deutchmeister Schutzen Corp

Classes or Types: One

Interesting Facts: None Known

Hallmarks: None

Design: A gold and enamel clawed cross with rays in the angles of the arms and a center medallion and a suspension eye on the top arm.

Obverse: A gold clawed cross with blue enameled arms with gold rays between them. In the center of the cross is a multi-colored enameled center medallion.

Reverse: The back is plain with an attached pin

Weight: Unknown

Size: Unknown

Type of Material: Bronze gilt and enamel

Variations: None known

Designer: Unknown

Manufacturer: Unknown

Number Issued: Unknown

Case: Unknown

Ribbon: Unknown

Attachments: None

Miniature: None known





Semi-Official Society Awards

Red Cross War Help Bureau War Work Office War Welfare Organization Medal

(Rote Kreuz Kriegshilfsburo Kriegssorgeamt Medaille)



Date Issued: 1914

Reason Issued: To recognize service to the Red Cross War Help Bureau War Welfare Organization

Classes or Types: One

Interesting Facts:

- When medals feature more than one ruler the medal is usually of the country who's ruler is in the foreground
- Service medals came as wearable and table medals

Hallmarks: None

Design: A round medal with flat round attached suspension eye.

Obverse: Inside a slightly raised rim is a wreath of laurel leaves inside of which are the busts of Franz Joseph of Austria and Wilhelm of Germany facing to the right. The bust of Franz Joseph is in the foreground. The busts are surrounded by a laurel wreath



Reverse: Inside a slightly raised rim is an inscription in six lines on a plain field. The inscription reads: **FUR DAS / ROTE KREUZ / KRIEGS HILFSBORO / KRIEGS-FUSORGE / AMT / .1914.** Translation: For the Red Cross War Help Bureau War Work Office 1914.



Weight: 5.5 grams

Size: 23 mm

Type of Material: Bronze with a silver wash

Variations: None known

Designer: Unknown

Manufacturer: Unknown

Number Issued: Unknown

Case: Unknown

Ribbon: Straight White ribbon with narrow red lines at the borders

Attachments: None

Miniature: None known





Semi-Official Society Awards

War Help Bureau Office of Attrition Cross

(Kreuz vom der kreigshelfsenbuero Verschleiss Offize)



Date Issued: 1914

Reason Issued: Unknown

Classes or Types: One

Interesting Facts: When medals feature more than one ruler the meal is usually of the country whose ruler is in the foreground

Hallmarks: None

Design: A clawed cross with sloping edges and a flat round attached suspension eye.

Obverse: A clawed cross with sloping edges and a slightly oblong center medallion. The inner portion of the cross arms are recessed and lined with a beaded outline. The center medallion bears the busts of Franz Joseph of Austria and Wilhelm of Germany facing to the right. The bust of Franz Joseph is in the foreground. A crown rests on the upper edge of the center medallion at the base of the upper cross arm. On the lower arm is the date 1914

Reverse: Inside a raised rim is an inscription in four lines on a plain field. The inscription reads: **OFFIZ. VERSCHLEISS / DES / KRIEGSHILFS / BUREAUS.** Translation: Office of the War help Bureau. Below this inscription is a maker's mark consisting of the words, **GES GESCHUTZ W.R.** Translation: copyright W.R.

Weight: 5.4 grams

Size: 28 mm

Type of Material: Bronze with a silver wash

Variations: None known

Designer: W. Rohrwasser

Manufacturer: W. Rohrwasser

Number Issued: Unknown

Case: Unknown

Ribbon: Unknown

Attachments: None

Miniature: None known





Semi-Official Society Awards
Volunteer Military Workers Society Merit Cross
(Verdienstkreuz fur freiwilligen Militarischen Arbeitsdienst)



Date Issued: Circa 1914-1918

Reason Issued: Given for meritorious service in support of the work of the Volunteer Military Workers Society

Classes or Types: One

Interesting Facts: None known

Hallmarks: None Known

Design: A gilded white clawed cross with gilded laurel branches in the angles of the arms of the cross and a loop shaped eye on the upper arm.

Obverse: On the white enameled arms of the cross is a gilded inscription reading from the top clockwise are the words **VOLUNTARIE / FUNCTIS / IN MILITARI / LABORE**. In the center of the cross is an oval golden medallion with a raised rim inside of which is beading. The medallion is etched and on this etched background is the monogram of Franz Joseph in high relief: **FJI**.

Reverse: Plain

Weight: Unknown

Size: 34 mm

Type of Material: Bronze

Variations: None known

Designer: Unknown

Manufacturer: Unknown

Number Issued: Unknown

Case: Unknown

Ribbon: Yellow and red laddered

Attachments: None

Miniature: None known





Semi-Official Society Awards

Decoration of the Austrian Society of the Silver Cross

(Ehrenzeichen der Österreichischen Gesellschaft vom Silbernen Kreuz)



Date Issued: Circa 1914-1918

Reason Issued: Given for meritorious service to the Austrian Society of the Silver Cross

Classes or Types: One

Interesting Facts: None known

Hallmarks: None Known

Design: A gilded metal bow below which is a diamond shaped white-enamelled plaque with even slightly curved sides

Obverse: A gilded metal bow below which is a diamond shaped white-enamelled plaque with even slightly curved sides on which is a golden imperial eagle, also on the plaque is a silver clawed cross which has long etched arms

Reverse: Unknown

Weight: Unknown

Size: 45 mm

Type of Material: Gold, Silver and enamel

Variations: None known

Designer: Unknown

Manufacturer: Unknown

Number Issued: Unknown

Case: Unknown

Ribbon: White with wide bright blue stripes and silver edges

Attachments: None

Miniature: None known





Semi-Official Society Awards

Decoration for the Care of Soldiers

(Ehrenzeichen fur Soldatenpflege)



Date Issued: 1916-1918

Reason Issued: Given as a reward for those who had provided care for Austrian war wounded

Classes or Types: Two

- Officers cross of the decoration for the care of soldiers
- Service cross of the decoration for the care of soldiers

Interesting Facts: This cross was commonly referred to as the Blue Cross

Hallmarks: None Known

Design:

- Officers cross: A gold, blue enameled clawed cross with a lower arm that is longer than the rest.
- Service cross; A gold, blue enameled cross with arms of equal length

Obverse:

- Officers Cross: A gold, blue enameled clawed cross with a lower arm that is longer than the rest. On the cross is inscribed, **BLAUES KREUZ**. Translation: blue cross
- Service cross; A gold, blue enameled cross with arms of equal length. On the cross is inscribed, **BLAUES KREUZ**. Translation: blue cross

Reverse: Unknown

Weight: Unknown

Size:

- Officers Cross: 49 X 42 mm
- Service cross: 33 mm in diameter

Type of Material: Gold and enamel

Variations: None known

Designer: Unknown

Manufacturer: Unknown

Number Issued: Unknown

Case: Unknown

Ribbon: Unknown

Attachments: A gold letter K

Miniature: None known





Semi-Official Society Awards

Sovereign Military Order of Jerusalem (Grand Priory of Austria and Bohemia) Cross of Merit

(Souveraner Militarischer Ritterorden des Heiligen Johannes von Jerusalem (Grosspriorat Osterreich und Bohemen) Verdienstkreuz



Image courtesy of Dorotheum

Date Issued: 1916-1918

Reason Issued: To reward exceptional service particularly service to the Order of St John Austrian and Bohemian Chapter

Classes or Types: Seven

- Neck Cross of the Merit Cross
- Breast Cross of the Merit Cross
- Gold Merit Cross
- Silver Merit Cross
- Gold Merit Medal
- Silver Merit Medal
- Bronze Merit Medal

Interesting Facts:

- Founded in 1916 by Bailiff Thun von Hohenstein of the Austrian Bohemian Baily
- The Neck cross can also be worn on the breast
- In 1920 the crosses were made available to the entire Order of St. John
- Potential recipients had to receive permission from the sovereign in order to accept the award
- Recipients of the Merit Cross on neck ribbon could not wear the lower grade of the cross
- Recipients of the Gold Merit Cross could wear the silver as well

Hallmarks:

1. The Mark of Carl Frederick Rothe
2. The 750 fine silver hallmark
3. The Vienna Assay Office Mark





Semi-Official Society Awards

Sovereign Military Order of Jerusalem (Grand Priory of Austria and Bohemia) Cross of Merit

(Souveraner Militarischer Ritterorden des Heiligen Johannes von Jerusalem (Grosspriorat Osterreich und Bohemen)
Verdienstkreuz)

Design:

- Neck Merit Cross: A gold, white enameled Malta type cross with an elongated lower arm and with notched and curved ends. On the center of the cross is a round red enameled medallion with a white enameled Malta cross in the center and a gold inscription on a white gilt bordered field.
- Merit Cross: A gold, white enameled Malta cross. On the center of the cross is a round red enameled medallion with a white enameled Malta cross in the center and a gold inscription on a white gilt bordered field.
- Gold and silver Merit Crosses: A gold, or silver Malta cross. On the center of the cross is a round medallion with a silver Malta cross in the center and an inscription on the field around it
- Gold, silver and bronze Merit Medals: An oval gold, silver or bronze medal with a raised rim inside of which is an oak wreath border. Inside the oak border is a Malta cross. At the top of the medal just below the suspension ring is an oval cartouche within which is a Geneva cross.

Obverse:

- Neck Merit Cross: A gold, white enameled Malta type cross with an elongated lower arm and with notched and curved ends. On the center of the cross is a round red enameled medallion with a white enameled Malta cross in its center and a gold bordered, white enameled band around the edge with a gold inscription: **MIL.ORD. EQUITUM. MELIT. BENE. MERETI.** Translation: Well Meriting the Military Order of the Knights of Malta. A suspension eye is attached to the upper arm of the cross to attach it to the ribbon

- Merit Cross: A gold, white enameled Malta type cross with notched and curved ends. On the center of the cross is a round red enameled medallion with a white enameled Malta cross in its center and a gold bordered, white enameled band around the edge with a gold inscription: **MIL.ORD. EQUITUM. MELIT. BENE. MERETI.** Translation: Well Meriting the Military Order of the Knights of Malta. A suspension eye is attached to the upper arm of the cross to attach it to the ribbon



Image courtesy of Dorotheum





Semi-Official Society Awards

Sovereign Military Order of Jerusalem (Grand Priory of Austria and Bohemia) Cross of Merit

(Souveraner Militarischer Ritterorden des Heiligen Johannes von Jerusalem (Grosspriorat Osterreich und Bohemen) Verdienstkreuz

Obverse:

- Gold and silver merit crosses: A gold, or silver Malta cross with notched and curved ends and with a raised border and a deeply cut pebbled inset that follows the shape of the arms. Within the inset portion of the arms is a raised portion that replicates the shape of the arms. On the center of the cross is a round medallion of the same material as the cross with a silver Malta cross on a field composed of fine vertical lines. Around the edge of the center medallion is an inscription **MIL.ORD. EQUITUM. MELIT. BENE. MERETI.** Translation: Well Meriting the Military Order of the Knights of Malta on a bordered field of the same material as the cross. Attached to the upper arm is an eye for attaching the cross to the ribbon.



Images courtesy of Dorotheum

- Gold, Silver and Bronze Merit Medals: An oval medal with a raised rim inside of which is an oak wreath border. Inside the oak border is a Malta cross. At the top of the medal just below the suspension eye is an oval cartouche within which is a Geneva cross



Images courtesy of Dorotheum





Semi-Official Society Awards

Sovereign Military Order of Jerusalem (Grand Priory of Austria and Bohemia) Cross of Merit

(Souveraner Militarischer Ritterorden des Heiligen Johannes von Jerusalem (Grosspriorat Osterreich und Bohemen)
Verdienstkreuz)

Reverse:

- Neck Merit Cross: A gold, white enameled Malta type cross with an elongated lower arm and with notched and curved ends. On the center of the cross is a round red enameled medallion with a gold date **1916** in its center. Around the medallion is a gold rimed white enameled border with a laurel wreath in gold. A suspension eye is attached to the upper arm of the cross to attach it to the ribbon
- Merit Cross: A gold, white enameled Malta type cross with notched and curved ends. On the center of the cross is a round red enameled medallion with a gold date **1916** in its center. Around the medallion is a gold rimed white enameled border with a laurel wreath in gold. A suspension eye is attached to the upper arm of the cross to attach it to the ribbon



Image courtesy of Dorotheum



Image courtesy of Dorotheum





Semi-Official Society Awards

Sovereign Military Order of Jerusalem (Grand Priory of Austria and Bohemia) Cross of Merit

(Souveraner Militarischer Ritterorden des Heiligen Johannes von Jerusalem (Grosspriorat Osterreich und Bohemen) Verdienstkreuz)

Reverse:

- Gold, Silver and Bronze Merit Medals: An oval medal with a raised rim inside of which is an oak wreath border tied at the bottom with a bow. Inside the oak border is inscribed in four lines **MIL.ORDO/EQVITVM/ MELITENSIVM/BENE MERENTI**. At the top of the medal in a round cartouche is the cross of St. John above which is a suspension eye for attaching the medal to the ribbon.



Image courtesy of Dorotheum

Weight:

- Neck Cross of the Merit Cross: Unknown
- Breast cross of the Merit Cross: Unknown
- Gold Merit Cross: Unknown
- Silver Merit Cross: Unknown
- Gold Merit Medal: Unknown
- Silver Merit Medal: Unknown
- Bronze Merit Medal: Unknown

Size:

- Neck Cross of the Merit Cross: 42 mm in width and 44 mm in height
- Breast cross of the Merit Cross: 42 mm
- Gold Merit Cross: 42-45 mm
- Silver Merit Cross: 42-45 mm
- Gold Merit Medal: 32 mm in width and 43 mm in height
- Silver Merit Medal: 32 mm in width and 43 mm in height
- Bronze Merit Medal: 32 mm in width and 43 mm in height

Type of Material:

- Neck Cross of the Merit Cross: Gold and Enamel
- Breast cross of the Merit Cross: Gold and Enamel
- Gold Merit Cross: Gold
- Silver Merit Cross: Silver
- Gold Merit Medal: Gold
- Silver Merit Medal: Silver
- Bronze Merit Medal: Bronze

Variations:

- Gold Merit Cross Type I: As described above
- Gold Merit Cross Type II: As described above except with a white enameled band around the central medallion and a white enameled Malta Cross in the center (1916)

Designer:

Manufacturer:

- Frederick Rothe
- Godet, Berlin (Type II silver merit cross)



Image courtesy of Dorotheum





Semi-Official Society Awards

Sovereign Military Order of Jerusalem (Grand Priory of Austria and Bohemia) Cross of Merit

(Souveraner Militarischer Ritterorden des Heiligen Johannes von Jerusalem (Grosspriorat Osterreich und Bohemen)
Verdienstkreuz)

Number Issued:

- Neck Cross of the Merit Cross: Unknown
- Breast cross of the Merit Cross: Unknown
- Gold Merit Cross: Unknown
- Silver Merit Cross: Unknown
- Gold Merit Medal: Unknown
- Silver Merit Medal: Unknown
- Bronze Merit Medal: Unknown

Case:

- Neck Cross of the Merit Cross: A rectangular red leather or simulated leather case with gilt trim and lettering on the lid. The lid inner liner is white silk and often has the makers name, logo or both. The bottom inner liner is black fitted velveteen.
- Breast cross of the Merit Cross: Unknown
- Gold Merit Cross: Unknown
- Silver Merit Cross: Unknown
- Gold Merit Medal: Unknown
- Silver Merit Medal: Unknown
- Bronze Merit Medal: Unknown





Semi-Official Society Awards

Sovereign Military Order of Jerusalem (Grand Priory of Austria and Bohemia) Cross of Merit

(Souveraner Militarischer Ritterorden des Heiligen Johannes von Jerusalem (Grosspriorat Osterreich und Bohemen)
Verdienstkreuz)

Ribbon: A black ribbon for civil service and a black ribbon with a narrow red white border on the right for the ribbon bar and on the bottom of suspension ribbons for war service. The ribbon came in the form of a 4cm neck ribbon and a standard tri-fold ribbon for men and a bow for women



Attachments: A red shield with a White Cross which is found on the neck Cross and on the tri-fold ribbon when the neck cross is worn on the chest



Miniature: Miniatures of these decorations exist





Semi-Official Society Awards

Austrian Schutzen Society Vienna Chapter Badge

(Oesterreicher Schutzen Bund Wiener Verien)



Date Issued: Unknown

Reason Issued: Issued to members of the Austrian Schutzen Society Chapter in Vienna

Classes or Types: One

Interesting Facts:

- The Schutzen Societies were used to train citizens to serve in the Landwehr or Honved
- The badge is made in two halves that are riveted together with four rivets, one in each corner of the badge.

Hallmarks: None

Design: A rectangular badge designed to look like a banner. This badge has a large articulated suspender attached to the top with a ball shaped eye.

Obverse: A rectangular badge designed to look like a banner with stylized flowers and two horizontal suspension poles. On the obverse is placed a silver imperial two headed eagle with crowns on each eagle's head and the imperial crown on banderols above and between the heads. On the eagles breast is a 29 mm in diameter 5 mm wide circular band with black enamel. On the band in silver letters is the inscription: **OESTERREICHEISCHER SCHUTZENBUND** * Translation: Austrian Schutzen Society. In the center of this circular medallion are banners over which is placed crossed rifles under a black and silver enameled target. Around the target is an oak wreath tied at the bottom with a bow.

Reverse: A rectangular badge designed to look like a banner with stylized flowers and two horizontal suspension poles. On the reverse is placed a medallion consisting of two crossed rifles above which is 39 mm circular black enameled medallion on which is inscribed in gold letters: **WIENER Schutzen-Verein**. Translation: Vienna Schutzen Chapter. At the bottom of this medallion is a decorative element. Inside the medallion is the coat of arms of Vienna on finely pebbled gold background.

Weight: 48.5 grams

Size: The body of the badge is 65 mm in height and 40 mm wide including suspension. The width including the horizontal polls is 52 mm.

Type of Material: Bronze, Silver and enamel

Variations: None known

Designer: Unknown

Manufacturer: Unknown

Number Issued: Unknown





Semi-Official Society Awards
Austrian Schutzen Society Vienna Chapter Badge
(Oesterreicher Schutzen Bund Wiener Verien)

Case: Unknown

Ribbon: Unknown but it is known to have been 40 mm in diameter and straight

Attachments: None known

Miniature: None known





Semi-Official Society Awards

Honor Insignia of the Steiermark Honor Guard

(Ehrenzeichen vom Steiermark Ehrenwachen)



Date Issued: 1934

Reason Issued: Issued to members of the Steiermark Ehrenwachen (Steieren Honor Guard) to reward members for meritorious acts that benefited the government of the canton in resisting the socialist and communist Insurrection in 1934.

Classes or Types: There were two classes of this award and two types

- Silver Decoration
- Silver Decoration with July 1934 Campaign Bar
- Bronze Decoration

Interesting Facts: This award was issued during the period between the wars when societies were formed to resist the socialists and communists.

Hallmarks: There are marks on the reverse tips of the wings

- On the right wing is marked **GES.GESH** (legally Patented)
- On the left wing is marked with what appears to be **H. GNAD**

Design: An oval eagle shaped badge with the head turned to the viewer's right and a thin loop suspension eye.

Obverse: An eagle shaped badge with the head turned to the viewer's right and the tongue extended. The wings are partially spread and the talons are spread so that they touch the outer edges of the wings. The feathers are well defined. On the breast of the eagle is a helmet under which passes crossed swords.

Reverse: The back of an eagle with the head turned to the right and the tongue extended. The wings are partially spread. Horizontally across the back of the eagle at about the midpoint is inscribed **19 II 34** (February, 1934).

Weight:

- Bronze Medal: 23 grams
- Silver Medal: 28 grams

Size: The body of the badge with suspension ring is 50 mm in height and 32 mm wide

Type of Material: Bronze and silver





Semi-Official Society Awards

Honor Insignia of the Steiermark Honor Guard

(Ehrenzeichen vom Steiermark Ehrenwachen)

Variations:

- Type I: The decoration with large suspension loop and with the eagle's tongue ending at the end of the beak. The feathers of the decoration are not well defined.
- Type II: The decoration with a small suspension loop and with the eagle's tongue extending past the end of the beak and attached to the edge of the right wing at the end of the beak. The feathers of the decoration are well defined.

Designer: Unknown

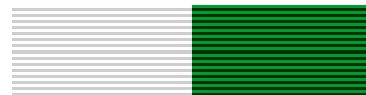
Manufacturer: Hans Gnad of Vienna

Number Issued: Unknown

Case: Unknown

Ribbon: Half Green and half white with the green portion on the right. The ribbon comes in two types:

- A trifold ribbon of 50 mm
- A straight ribbon of 29 mm



Attachments: **The July 1934 Campaign Bar:** An 11 mm high and 29 mm wide rectangular silver bar with a laurel leaf design on the upper and lower border. In the center of the bar is a helmet with crossed swords passing below it.

- The silver bars are seen on silver medals so it is possible that bronze bars exist for the bronze medals. However, none have been seen by the author to date.

Miniature: Known to exist



Image courtesy of Dorotheum

Image courtesy of Dorotheum

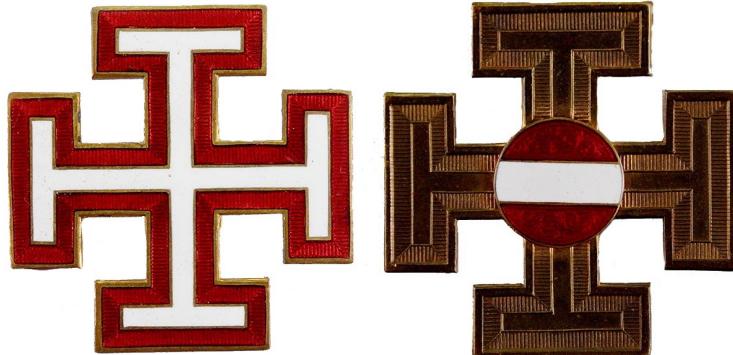




Semi-Official Society Awards

Fatherland Front Decoration

(Ehrenzeichen Vom Vaterlandischen Front)



Honor Cross Second Class

Honor Cross Forth Class

Date Issued: 1935-1938

Reason Issued: Issued to members of the Vaterlandische Front (Fatherland Front) by Dollfus and Schuschnigg to reward members for acts that benefited the Fatherland party in Austria.

Classes or Types: There were two types of awards, Honor crosses and decorations

- Honor Crosses came in 4 classes numbered 1 through 4
- There were three classes of decorations which were further divided into two grades
 - ◊ Gold Decoration first class
 - ◊ Silver Decoration first class
 - ◊ Bronze Decoration first class
 - ◊ Gold Decoration second class
 - ◊ Silver Decoration second class
 - ◊ Bronze Decoration second class

Interesting Facts:

This award was issued during the period between the wars when societies were formed to resist the socialists.

- The Fatherland Front were also called the blacks because they were supported by the church who's priests wore black. Their opponents the socialists were called the reds

Hallmarks:

- The makers mark
- The number 800 for 800 fine silver

Design:

- Honor crosses: A pin back oval badge in the form of a Potent cross.
- Decoration: A pin back oval badge with an enameled Potent cross in the center.

Obverse:

- Honor Cross, first class: A pin back enameled potent cross
- Honor Cross, second class: A pin back enameled white enameled potent cross with red edges
- Honor Cross, third class: A pin back enameled potent cross
- Honor Cross, forth class: A pin back bronze potent cross with a round center medallion that is enameled, from top to bottom, red, white, red
 - Fatherland Front Decoration, first class in gold: A pin back gold oval badge with a red and white enameled Potent cross in the center. The badge itself is in the form of a laurel wreath with a ribbon passing over it at intervals (12, 3, 6, and nine o'clock positions)





Semi-Official Society Awards

Fatherland Front Decoration

(Ehrenzeichen Vom Vaterlandischen Front)



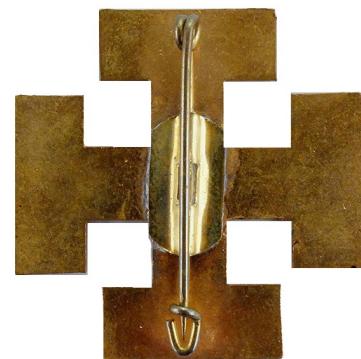
Second Class Silver Decoration, obverse and reverse

Obverse:

- Fatherland Front Decoration, first class in silver: A pin back silver oval badge with a red and white enameled Potent cross in the center. The badge itself is in the form of a laurel wreath with a ribbon passing over it at intervals (12, 3, 6, and nine o'clock positions)
- Fatherland Front Decoration, first class in bronze: A pin back bronze oval badge with a red and white enameled Potent cross in the center. The badge itself is in the form of a laurel wreath with a ribbon passing over it at intervals (12, 3, 6, and nine o'clock positions)
- Fatherland Front Decoration, second class in gold: A pin back gold oval badge with a white enameled Potent cross in the center. The badge itself is in the form of a laurel wreath with a ribbon passing over it at intervals (12, 3, 6, and nine o'clock positions)
- Fatherland Front Decoration, second class in silver: A pin back silver oval badge with a white enameled Potent cross in the center. The badge itself is in the form of a laurel wreath with a ribbon passing over it at intervals (12, 3, 6, and nine o'clock positions)
- Fatherland Front Decoration, second class in bronze: A pin back bronze oval badge with a white enameled Potent cross in the center. The badge itself is in the form of a laurel wreath with a ribbon passing over it at intervals (12, 3, 6, and nine o'clock positions)

Reverse:

- The reverse of the honor crosses is plain metal with a pin for attaching the medal to the coat.
- The reverse of the type I badge is concave and plain except for the reverse image of the laurel leaf strike on the obverse of the badge. The reverse of the enameled badge in both types is also plain. The pin is attached at the top of the wreath and passes through a U shaped clasp at the bottom of the badge. The pin itself is needle shaped and thin.
- The reverse of the Type II badge is also plane but also flat. The reverse of the enameled badge in both types is also plain. The pin is attached at the top of the wreath and passes through a U shaped clasp at the bottom of the badge. The pin itself is needle shaped and thin





Semi-Official Society Awards

Fatherland Front Decoration

(Ehrenzeichen Vom Vaterlandischen Front)



Bronze First Class Decoration



Bronze Second Class Decoration

Weight:

- For the Honor Cross is 10.7 grams
- Weight for the Fatherland Front Decorations is 24 grams

Size:

- For the Honor Cross is 36.6 mm in diameter
- For the Fatherland Front Decoration the body of the badge is 57 mm in height and 44 mm wide

Type of Material:

- Honor Cross is gold and silver gilt metal, bronze and enamel
- Fatherland Front Decoration is gold and silver gilt metal, bronze and enamel

Variations:

- Type I Decoration: As described with a concave wreath reverse
- Type II Decoration: As described with a flat wreath reverse

Designer: Unknown

Manufacturer: Unknown

Number Issued: Unknown

Case: A two and a half inch by three and a half inch rectangular case with a simulated leather finish. The case is on third red, one third white and one third red. The center portion is white. On the white portion of the case is cross of the Fatherland Front. The inner liner of the lid is white silk. The inner portion of the bottom of the case is red velvet. The outside bottom of the box is red

Ribbon: None

Attachments: None

Miniature: None





Semi-Official Society Awards

Honor Cross of the Austrian Reserve Officers Shooting Society (Ehrenkreuz des Österreichischen Reserve Offiziers Schutzbund)

Date Issued: Unknown

Reason Issued: The reason for issuing this cross is unknown

Classes or Types: Unknown

Interesting Facts: None known

Hallmarks: Unknown

Design: A golden black enameled pin back clawed cross with a center medallion composed of the imperial crown over crossed swords.

Obverse: A golden black enameled clawed cross with a center medallion composed of the imperial crown over crossed swords. On the arms of the cross are the letters **ORS: Reserve Offiziers Schutzbund**

Reverse: Unknown except that it has a pin to attach it to the clothing

Weight: Unknown

Size: 48 mm in diameter

Type of Material: Bronze gilt

Variations: None known

Designer: Unknown

Manufacturer: Unknown

Number Issued: Unknown

Case: Unknown

Ribbon: Unknown

Attachments: Unknown

Miniature: Unknown

